National POLST Paradigm:  
Seven Deadly Sins of Improper POLST Use Workshop

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DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESPECTING CHOICES
CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

We have nothing to disclose.

SESSION GOALS

Goals:
1. Identify common improper uses of POLST forms
2. Discuss strategies to prevent or correct
3. Provide resources and tools to help you!
How many of you use the POLST Paradigm (POLST forms, POLST discussions) in your organization?

Yes

No

POLST: Avoid the Seven Deadly Sins
By Charlie Sabatino

National POLST Paradigm
Appropriate POLST Paradigm Form Use Policy
OUR SEVEN DEADLY SINS

1. Mandating completion of POLST forms
2. Providing incentives for POLST form completion
3. Completing a form without meaningful conversation (or without patient or surrogate knowledge)
4. Giving a patient or surrogate the POLST form to complete
5. Signing a POLST form for a healthy patient
6. Never reviewing completed POLST forms
7. Failing to evaluate use of the POLST Paradigm

QUICK REMINDER ABOUT POLST
• Immediately available
• Recognizable order set
• Standard format
• Medical orders to EMS
HOW WE PLAN TO ROLL FOR THE NEXT 85 MINUTES

- 5-10 minutes per sin
- Start discussion with a poll
- Discussion of sin, key points
- Last 15 minutes: general discussion

Sin #1 Poll - The Better Care Nursing Home asks everyone to complete a POLST form upon admission.
Sin #1: Mandating completion of POLST forms

Always Voluntary

Sin #2 Poll - After observing low advance care planning rates in her hospital, an administrator offers a bonus to discharge planners for completing X number of advance care planning documents.

A. 

B.
SIN #2

- Service Level Agreement (SLA): requires % of ACP in place.
- Tying salary incentives to % of ACP documents.

**TWO PROBLEMS**

1. Treats POLST and Advance Directives as the same document.
2. Ignores patient autonomy.

Advance Care Plans
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard of Care</th>
<th>Advance Directives</th>
<th>Medical Orders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health care Power of Attorney</td>
<td>POLST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Surrogate</td>
<td>DNR</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Living Will</td>
<td>DNAR</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Advance Directive vs. POLST Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Document</th>
<th>Advance Directive</th>
<th>POLST Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal Document</td>
<td>Medical Order</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who Needs?</th>
<th>All competent adults</th>
<th>Seriously ill or frail (surprise question)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tx Focus</th>
<th>Future</th>
<th>Current</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who completes</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Health care professional</th>
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<tr>
<th>Appoints a surrogate?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tr>
<th>Can EMS Follow?</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
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</table>
**Sin #2: Incentivizing ACP**

- Not just a POLST problem
- Patients have right to say no to:
  - ACP (advance directives and POLST forms)
  - Health care treatments
- A facility, organization, or other entity may have a policy to offer a POLST form to all appropriate patients but should never have a requirement of completion.

**Sin #3 Poll - Nurse Nancy asked patient Mr. Jones if he wanted to try CPR or die naturally. He says he wants to live so Nancy completes a POLST form saying Attempt CPR and Full Interventions.**

When poll is active, respond at PollEv.com/respchoices2
**Sin #3: Completing a Form Without Meaningful Conversation**

Importance of Conversation

- Reflect on goals, values, beliefs
- Understand future situations and related decisions
- Learn how to talk about these reflections and decisions with others

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**Skill Development**
Sin #4 Poll - To streamline the admissions process, Sunrise Nursing Home puts a POLST form in their welcome packet to all new residents, asking them to complete it prior to admission.

A.

B.

Sin #4: Giving a patient or surrogate the POLST form to complete

Another way this happens: pre-signed forms. HCP isn’t readily available so pre-signs forms to give to staff.

What’s the problem?

- POLST is a medical order- license is on the line
- Would you pre-sign other orders?
**SIN #4: GIVING A PATIENT OR SURROGATE THE POLST FORM TO COMPLETE**

Great from systems process- get code status done quickly. So why is this bad?

- Unclear if patient had decision-making capacity
- No conversation about goals of care
- No evaluation if residents are appropriate for POLST
- High health literacy document
- **IT'S A MEDICAL ORDER!**

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**National POLST Paradigm Task Force Supports Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants Signing POLST Paradigm Forms**

Approved by National POLST Paradigm Task Force on December 15th, 2016

The National POLST Paradigm Task Force (NPPTF) recommends that physicians, advanced practice registered nurses, and physician assistants be permitted to participate in the POLST Paradigm process and sign POLST Paradigm Forms. The NPPTF strongly encourages training of all clinicians who complete POLST Paradigm Forms.
**Signature Requirements for a Valid POLST Form by State**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Patient</th>
<th>Surrogate permitted (if patient lacks capacity)</th>
<th>Physician (MD/DO)</th>
<th>Physician Assistant (PA)</th>
<th>Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (NP, FNP, ARNP)</th>
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Full chart available at www.polst.org/map

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**PATIENT SIGNATURES**

The National POLST Paradigm Task Force encourages all states to require patient or surrogate/proxy signature, attestation or acknowledged verbal approval for POLST form orders to be valid.

Patient signatures:

- It’s not perfect
- It’s a little weird
- It’s to help show patient is aware they have a POLST
- Some think it helps show there was a conversation
Sin #5 Poll - Dr. Milton signs POLST forms for all his patients since he thinks it is better than an advance directive in providing directions about future care.

A. Great Idea!  
B. No thanks.

National POLST Paradigm  
www.polst.org
Complete an Advance Directive

Update Advance Directive Periodically

Diagnosed with Advanced Illness or Frailty (at any age)

Complete a POLST Form

Update POLST as Health Status Changes

Treatment Wishes Honored

All Adults

CONVERSATION

INTENDED POLST PARADIGM POPULATION

Would I be surprised if this patient died within the next year?
**Sin 5: Why Should I Wait?**

**Flow of Emergency Care Standard of Care**
FLOW OF EMERGENCY CARE
POLST FORM
Sin #6 Poll - A POLST form was completed for Ms. Apply when she was admitted to the nursing home 3 years ago. The form is still on file, never has been reviewed.

THE PROBLEM

- Consistent failure to elicit, document, and honor preferences
- Common, preventable medical errors

Institute of Medicine (2014)
POLST FORMS (AND PREFERENCES) ARE DYNAMIC

Changes over time for registrants who submitted more than one form in the two years before death, N = 2004.
CMS REQUIREMENTS OF PARTICIPATION - ACP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- A resident’s preferences should be re-evaluated routinely and when there is a significant change in condition

§483.10 (g)(12)

CHANGING HEALTH STATUS

Full Treatment

Limited Treatment

Full Treatment Comfort Measures Only
Sin #7 Poll - Nursing home implemented POLST 5 years ago, administrator has a "gut feeling" all is going well since there haven't been any complaints.

A. Great Idea B. Not a Great Idea

WHAT COULD GO WRONG?
Nursing facilities must support ACP by doing the following:

- Communicate the resident’s wishes to the resident’s direct care staff and physician
- Inform the resident or resident representative of their right to establish an advance directive
- Assist the resident if he/she wishes to execute one or more directive(s)
- Document discussions in the medical record
- Place copies of advance directive(s) in the medical record

§483.10(c)(6), (c)(8), (g)(12)

The POLST Quality & Research Toolkit (2013)
- [http://polst.org/resources/quality-improvement/](http://polst.org/resources/quality-improvement/)

Quality Indicators Toolkit (Coming Soon!)
- Measure 1 - If the POLST form is properly completed and valid, it will include the minimum required elements and no conflicting orders.
- Measure 2 - If 100% of patients or residents have a POLST form, it is likely being used inappropriately.
Vision and Mission

Our vision is for all states to have adopted the POLST Paradigm, resulting in consistency of process, improved patient care and greater patient control and direction over medical treatment. Our mission is to advance the POLST Paradigm through stewardship, education, advocacy, support for POLST Paradigm program efforts and rational leadership.
Sign up form in website footer!
National POLST Paradigm

FIND OUT MORE AT WWW.POLST.ORG